

RECORD OF THE 2023 ANNUAL CONVENTION

Minutes of the 158th Annual Convention (Unapproved)

The Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh of the Episcopal Church in the United States November 11 A.D. 2023

The 158th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh of The Episcopal Church in the United States (the “Diocese”) was hosted by Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on Saturday, November 11, 2023.

Registration of Convention Deputies began at 7:45 a.m. in order for the necessary certifications to be completed.

The Convention commenced at 8:45am. The Right Rev. Dr. Ketlen A. Solak called the Convention to order, and after her opening prayer, the Bishop asked the Very Rev. Aidan Smith, Dean of Trinity Cathedral, to offer a general welcome. Following his welcome, the Convention continued with a service of Holy Eucharist.

At the conclusion of the liturgy, The Bishop called on Ms. Elaine Zevkovich to relay the logistical notes and information necessary for the conduct of the Convention.

At the conclusion of Ms. Zevkovich’s presentation, The Bishop called on the Rev. Canon James D. Shoucair to certify the roll of clergy entitled to seats as well as the lay deputies authorized to represent parishes entitled to representation at Convention. Canon Shoucair dispensed with a formal roll call and accordingly certified the roll.

The Bishop then called on Ms. Kathy Baird, who on behalf of Diocesan Council, nominated the Rev. Canon James D. Shoucair as Secretary to Convention to serve until the next annual Diocesan Convention. There being no other nominations, Canon Shoucair was elected unanimously as Secretary.

The Bishop then appointed the following persons:

Mr. Andrew Roman as Parliamentarian for the Convention; Mr. Jon Delano as Judge of Elections; and the Rev. Brandon Cooper as Assistant Judge of Elections.

Mr. Andy Roman, Canon James Shoucair and Canon Bonnie-Marie Yager-Wiggan to serve on the Committee of Claims of Lay Deputies to Seats.

Ms. Elaine Zevkovich as Convention manager.

The Bishop then called upon the Secretary to report on quorum.

The Secretary reported that there were eighty (80) lay deputies present whose credentials had been received before the Convention. He also reported that there were thirty-six (36) clergy present who duly affirmed that they were of regular standing and canonically and physically present in the diocese for the past three months. This brought the total deputies present to one hundred sixteen (116), which constituted a quorum for the transaction of business. The Bishop called for the approval of the minutes of the 157th Annual Convention of the Diocese as found in the 2023 Preconvention Journal, which was then duly moved, seconded and approved by unanimous vote.

The Bishop then called on Ms. Kathy Baird, President of Diocesan Council who moved the adoption of the Standard Rules of Order and printed agenda. The Resolution, moved and seconded, was passed unanimously.

The Bishop then called on Mr. Bryan Webb, the Judge of Assessments, and asked him to give his report. Mr. Webb was unable to attend the Convention and Ms Suella Pipal gave the report in his place. She reported that all parishes other than Holy Cross, Homewood were in compliance with canonical requirements

The Bishop then recognized Ms. Betti Rottschaefer, the Judge of Audits, who reported that all parishes, other than Holy Cross Homewood were in compliance with the canonical requirement on audits for the year. She noted that St Michael's Wayne Township had not submitted a parochial report or audit, but had no deputies present at Convention.

The Bishop then called upon Mr. Jon Delano, chair of the Diocesan Nominating Committee, who presented the slate of nominees as set forth in the Preconvention Journal, section D, and moved that the nominations be closed. The resolution passed unanimously.

The Judge of Elections then invoked the standard rules of order B-2, and moved that the Secretary cast a unanimous vote of Convention for the listed nominees in all uncontested open positions as follows: **Standing Committee** (1 clergy); **Constitution and Canons** (1 clergy, 1 lay); **Commission on Ministry** (1 position lay or clergy); **Cathedral Chapter** (1 clergy, 1 lay) ; **Board of trustees** (1 lay); **Growth fund** (1 position lay or clergy); **Regional disciplinary Board** (1 clergy). The resolution passed unanimously. The Judge of Elections then directed the Secretary to let the minutes reflect the results of the uncontested elections as follows:

Standing Committee: The Rev. Canon Bonnie-Marie Yager-Wiggan.

Cathedral Chapter: The Rev. Dr. Luke Zerra; Mr. Shawn Brooks

Constitution and Canons: The Rev. Dr. Julie L. Smith; Mr. Ian Everhart

Commission on Ministry: Mr. Charles W. Atwood

Board of Trustees: Mr. Thomas Moore

Growth Fund: Ms. Elizabeth Hardie

Regional Disciplinary Board: The Rev. Charles Fischer.

The Judge of Elections then instructed the Convention on the manner of casting votes for the one (1) contested election for the lay position on Standing Committee.

The Convention then went into a fifteen-minute recess.

Following the recess, the Bishop then called upon Mr. James Neral to present a report from the Diocesan Compensation Committee. Following his report, Mr. Neral recommended the adoption of the revised Compensation Guide and all its Appendices as set forth in the Preconvention Journal. The motion, moved and seconded, was duly approved by Convention.

The Bishop then asked the Judge of Elections to present the result of the election which he did as follows: Anthony Crisafio 44; Robert Eley 20; Eileen Sharbaugh 53. Mr. Delano reported that the required majority vote (60) had not been reached by any one (1) candidate. Accordingly, he instructed the Convention on the second ballot for the lay position on the Standing Committee.

The Bishop then called upon Dr. Joan Gundersen, who on behalf of the Constitution and Canons Committee, moved adoption of the changes to Canons XIV and XII, as set forth in section C of the

Preconvention Journal. The resolution passed by unanimous vote of Convention.

The Bishop then called upon Mr. Jamie McMahon who on behalf of the General Convention deputation of the diocese, reported on some of the issues to be addressed at the upcoming General Convention in 2024. In particular, he mentioned the election of the new Presiding Bishop as well as certain revisions to the Book of Common Prayer.

The Bishop then called upon Ms. Kathy Baird, president of Diocesan council, who presented a resolution thanking Trinity Cathedral, as set forth in Section C of the Preconvention Journal. The resolution, already moved and seconded, was duly approved by Convention.

The Bishop then delivered her Convention address as set forth on Exhibit A attached hereto. Following her address, the Bishop called upon Ms. Elaine Zevkovich to present the 2024 Diocesan budget. Following Ms. Zevkovich's report and a discussion pertaining, *inter alia*, to ACNA revenue, parish assessments, Diocesan spending policy, and Shepherd Wellness funding, the budget was approved by Convention.

The Bishop then called on Mr. Jon Delano and Mr. Andy Muhl to instruct the Convention on the work and logistics of District meetings to take place over the lunch break. Mr. Delano then reported the results of the second ballot as follows. Anthony Crisafio. 44. Eileen Sharbaugh 72. Eileen Sharbaugh was elected. Mr. Delano thanked the 4 tellers who had assisted him with the counting .

The Convention then recessed for lunch and District Meetings.

After the lunch recess, The Bishop called on Mr. Jon Delano, Judge of Elections, to report on the results of District Elections, which he did as follows:

District 1

Chair: Ms. Maximillion Elliott; Vice-Chair: Mr. Bruce Quayle; Board of Trustees: Mr. David M. Payne
Diocesan Council: Mr. Bruce Quayle

District 2

Chair: Mr. Don Block; Vice Chair: The Rev. Cameron Soulis.

District 3

Chair: Ms. Denise Peden; Vice Chair: Mr. Jerry Karashin.

District 4

Chair: The Rev. William Geiger; Vice-Chair: Mr. Mike Teore; Board of Trustees: Mr. Sean Murphy.

The Bishop then announced that the 2024 Convention would take place on November 9, 2024 of next year, with more details to follow.

The Bishop then declared the Convention adjourned and offered a closing prayer for the Convention.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Canon James D. Shoucair

EXHIBIT A

Bishop's Address 158th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh November 11, 2023

Before I begin my Address, I want to offer much gratitude to Dean Aidan Smith and to the staff and members of Trinity Cathedral for hosting our Convention.

It is also appropriate to recognize and offer our deep appreciation to our Convention Planning Team, consisting of Ms. Madison Canales, Mr. Andy Muhl, the Rev. Canon Kim Karashin, the Rev. Julie Smith, the Rev. Canon Jim Shoucair, and the Rev. Canon Bonnie-Marie Yager-Wiggan.

The Planning Team was led, this year, by our very own Treasurer and Director of Administration, Ms. Elaine Zevkovich, who generously offered and gave of her time and superb organizational skills to prepare and have us ready for Convention.

We are also very thankful for the contribution of the volunteers and the Convention Officers who are serving today.

I also want to take a moment to introduce the members of our Diocesan Office Team:

Ms. Shanaz Alam-Denlinger

Mr. Rich Creehan

Ms. Alisa Huston

The Rev. Dan Isadore

The Rev. Canon Kim Karashin

The Rev. Canon Eric McIntosh

Mr. Andy Muhl

Ms. Andrea Rath

Ms. Marlene Rihn

Ms. Elaine Zevkovich

Please join me in applauding each and every member of all our teams for their great contribution to the well-being of our common life.

Dearest People of God, first things must come first. Hence, I begin by joyfully proclaiming THIS TRUTH...

...THIS TRUTH, which gives us HOPE;
THIS TRUTH, which gives MEANING to our lives; ...
THIS TRUTH, which is our RAISON D'ÊTRE. ...

Jesus Christ is alive!

Jesus Christ IS alive!

JESUS CHRIST IS ALIVE...

AND, WE BELONG TO HIM!

THEREFORE, we've gathered to conduct the business of the 158th Annual Diocesan Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh in the JOY of THIS TREMENDOUS REALITY.

What's more... You can count on hearing me remind you of this POTENT, PREEMINENT, PRICELESS TRUTH over and over again.

Last year, I reminded you of how you and I were called by God.

I reminded you of how God was calling us to new life!

I reminded you of how we were a people reborn; a people being regenerated, filled with God's Holy Spirit, and called to be PARTNERS WITH JESUS CHRIST...

THIS CALL TO PARTNER WITH JESUS CHRIST is GOD'S FOREVER call on our lives.

Our first objective, THEREFORE, is to develop OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH JESUS and WITH EACH OTHER as fully as possible...

Our second objective is to MAKE THE MOST out of the time that we have in this world and the time we have together on this journey of faith and ministry.

During the summer I spent time reading through a lot of material—material pertaining to much of the work of discernment that you have done in the past.

I also looked at the notes from the two annual half-day retreats of our Governing Body Leaders.

As I read through the material, several words began to stand out.

I compiled these words into a WORD CLOUD, which I want to show you:



As you look at this Word Cloud you can easily see how certain words, some of them compounded, come to the forefront.

The word GROWTH looms LARGE at the CENTER.

Other words are also in the mix; words such as, communication, lay-led-ministries, joy, diocesan-identity, connection, new ministries, beloved community, care-of-small-churches, and a few more.

THESE are ALL WORDS that YOU HAVE EXPRESSED during the years when you engaged in discernment work.

You labored in committee.

You prayed together.

You talked amongst yourselves.

You gathered information and created reports. ...

I also imagine that, from time to time, you may have wondered about what happened to ALL THAT WORK.

Rest assured!

Your work has not been done in vain.

The colorful words peppering the CLOUD on the screen ENCAPSULATE YOUR WORK...

AND THESE WORDS are now BEHIND OUR VISION for the diocese.

Hence, God willing and during the time God grants us to walk on this journey together, MY VISION, OUR VISION for our diocese will focus on CULTIVATING GROWTH.

GROWTH is a multi-directional word.

We grow in depth and breadth and height.

We grow in maturity and spirituality and vitality.

We grow in wisdom and number, and strength.

BUT first and foremost, we are called to GROW IN FAITH, HOPE, and LOVE.

Our growth, HOWEVER, depends on the degree of our ROOTEDNESS in God; in Jesus; and in the Holy Spirit.

Our growth also depends on the degree to which we nurture, develop, and use the gifts we have been given.

Growth often brings joy, in spite of the inevitable and aptly named “GROWING PAINS.”

What’s more, growth and joy are likely outcomes of staying spiritually grounded, and of using our gifts in service.

Nurturing Joy is the theme of Convention and our focus for the coming year.

At this point you may be wondering: how will we engage in the work of nurturing joy?

Broadly speaking, we will engage in nurturing joy in these THREE ways:

- One, by increasing occasions for reflection, prayer, and fellowship.
- Two, by defining and communicating who we are as a diocese seeking to live out faith in the Episcopal Tradition.
- Three, by exploring opportunities to grow in various capacities.

In regard to increasing occasions for reflection, prayer and fellowship, we will do so through a mix of existing and newly-organized events.

Here is a preview of the events that we want to organize:

- *A Governing Body Leaders’ Retreat* – this annual gathering of the members of the Board of Trustees, Diocesan Council, and Standing Committee will continue to take place.
- *An Epiphany Staff Retreat* – Our diocesan team will gather early in the New Year to spend a day in spiritual reflection, prayer, and fellowship.
- *A Diocesan Day of Ministry Celebration* – This is a new event consisting of a diocesan-wide gathering to worship and fellowship and celebrate our ministry. Mark your calendars for Saturday, May 18!
- *Nurturing our Faith* – will consist of offering THREE Zoom gatherings between February and June to spend time in fellowship, prayer, and spiritual reflection through story sharing.

- *Thursday Breakfast with the Bishop* – will consist of periodic small group clergy breakfast gatherings with the bishop.
- *Holy Hikes* – will consist of intentional prayer-filled hikes, with elicited assistance from our parishes, will be open to all and especially to youth and young adults.
- *Summertime Fun* – This new fellowship summer event will be organized for clergy families.
- *An Afternoon Tea for Two* - is a new event for Clergy Plus One and will be held on Sunday afternoon, June 9 at Christ Church, North Hills.
- *A Beloved Community Retreat* – will consists of a half day retreat for reflection on the meaning of joy through the lens of beloved community.
- *An Annual Deacons' Half-Day Retreat* – will consist of gathering with the bishop.

In terms of engaging in communicating who we are, you may think it odd to equate communicating identity with nurturing joy.

Yet, isn't one of the joys of life the sharing of our authentic selves with others?

Doesn't deep joy come from expressing who we are in the circles of our relationships?

And so, you may ask, how will we nurture joy by defining and sharing who we are as a diocese?

We will aim to do so by means of these FIVE initiatives:

- First, we will adopt the FOLLOWING VISION STATEMENT with a complementing LOGO:
 - *"Grounded in Christ, Growing Anew!"*
 - This VISION STATEMENT reflects our identity and aspirations...
 - For it is by being GROUNDED IN CHRIST that you found the strength to persevere against all odds to preserve the life and ministry of our diocese.
 - It is by being GROUNDED IN CHRIST that life took root again and sprung up anew in our diocese.
 - AND, without a doubt, it is by continuing to be GROUNDED IN CHRIST that we will GROW ANEW into a healthier, thriving, and more vibrant diocese.
- Second, we will aim to share on our communication platforms key theological thoughts from our Episcopal Tradition.
- Third, we will work on creating a NEW WEBSITE to more effectively connect with online visitors and be more updated.
- Fourth, we will strive to share on our multiple communication platforms good news from our parishes and missions throughout the diocese.

- Finally, we will continue to offer assistance to our parishes with their communications needs.
[PAUSE]

NURTURING JOY is part and parcel of our VISION to remain Grounded in Christ and to Grow Anew. Finding occasions to grow in various capacities will potentially increase our joy and rootedness in Christ. How, then, will we increase our potential for joy and growth?

- First, we will do so by offering TWO formation and leadership skill development programs:
 - *One, A Lay Leadership Program* – to raise up additional lay worship leaders and lay preachers in partnership with the Stevenson School for Ministry.
 - *Two, A New Curacy Program* – to support the growth and development of new clergy.
- Second, we will seek to discover the potential for establishing New Episcopal Communities and look for new ways to improve support to our existing parishes.
 - A) A new Episcopal Community is in the works for 2024:
 - *The Abbey of St. Nicholas* – is an initiative seeking to establish a new Episcopal Community in collaboration with Church of the Advent, Brookline. This exploration began many months ago, and the plans for the *Abbey* will continue to be developed with the goal of formally launching the *Abbey* in mid to late 2024 – the Rev. William (Biff) Carpenter will serve as Abbot and he will also serve as the Priest-in-Charge at Church of the Advent. I invite you to read upcoming articles about this project in our newsletter. I also invite you to an open house and blessing on Wednesday, December 6.
 - *B) A New Committee will be formed to explore further potential for establishing New Episcopal Communities* – This committee will begin its work in early 2024.
 - *C) We Will Explore New Ways to Best Support Parishes* – by identifying categories of needs and the most appropriate type of support and resources.

Our VISION for our DIOCESE has already sprouted.

OUR VISION is emerging from the deep roots firmly planted at the foundation of our diocese.

Our VISION will become reality if we adhere to our OBJECTIVES, which are to develop OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH JESUS and WITH EACH OTHER as fully as possible...

AND to MAKE THE MOST out of the time that we have in this world and the time we have together on this journey of faith and ministry.

In this way, AND TOGETHER, we can focus on cultivating growth.

The two years since you elected me, and since I was ordained and consecrated as your bishop have gone by in a flash.

Life is so short!

Time is of the essence!

Faithfulness to God is the true source of joy!

GOOD NEWS ABOUND!

JESUS IS ALIVE and wants to guide us and work with us in genuine partnership.

OURS IS TO DO OUR PART!

It has been, and it continues to be a joy for me to serve as your bishop.

I look forward to our continued journey, working with you to see to the realization of OUR VISION as expressed by our STATEMENT:

 GROUNDED IN CHRIST, GROWING ANEW!

May all WE DO and BECOME be to the GLORY of GOD.